

MASTERS OF HORROR 2

THE DAMNED THING

by

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Based on the short story by

Ambrose Bierce

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT 1

A modest, two-acre ranch, in oil country outside Cloverdale, Texas; a polite town lying to itself. There's a battered pick-up truck in the driveway; on its door: "REDDLES WILDCAT DRILLING"; lots of oil rig equipment in the back.

BURN-IN: 1981. OVER we HEAR:

KEVIN (V.O.)
Smells good, mom.

2 INT. REDDLES HOUSE- DINING ROOM- NIGHT 2

JODI REDDLE (34) enters from the kitchen with a large dish of hot ribs. Her husband, JOHN (36), takes in the smell as she sets it on the table beside salad, mashed potatoes. ADJUST to KEVIN (13).

KEVIN
Ribs. That's three times this month according to my chart.

A good-humored glance from John.

JOHN
He keeps a chart.

KEVIN
I'm watching my protein intake as suggested by the FDA.

JOHN
I'll say Grace.

All knit fingers, bow heads. We notice John's distinctive ring.

JOHN (CONT'D)
For this delicious meal...
(a glance at Kevin)
...ribs in particular...we thank
God for his loving grace.

JODI
Amen.

Kevin manages an amen. Distant thunder cannons. Wind rises. It silences them for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

JODI (CONT'D)

Bad this year. Early.

JOHN

Wind's a bear. All the guys at work are restless.

KEVIN

(not looking up)

It's a legal defense for homicide in Norway; the wind.

He keeps eating. They react. Where does he get this stuff? He finally looks up. Shrugs.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Look it up.

They smile.

JODI

Jackie isn't herself. Went off on me today down at the mailbox. Everyone in the neighborhood is stirred up... acting weird.

JOHN

She's a nut. Born stirred-up.

KEVIN

She still think Kenny Rogers is Jesus, Mom?

JODI

Far as I know, yes.

Jodi holds up rib-sauced fingers.

JOHN

Gonna grab more napkins.

She exits into the kitchen. From there:

JODI (O.S.)

Kevin...give me a hand with something?

Kevin places down his napkin, heads into the kitchen.

2A INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

2A

Jodi places candles in a birthday cake. "HAPPY 37th JOHN" is on top in fancy frosting. ADJUST as Kevin enters. They exchange a conspiratorial smile.

JODI
(quietly)
...get some ice cream. He loves that.

She lights the candles. Then...PLIP. Kevin notices something black and oily dropping onto the cake; dropping from overhead, freckling the frosting. He looks up, sees a streak of black oil on the ceiling.

KEVIN
(indicating clock)
Mom?

She sees it, too. Confused; unnerved. Kevin is now staring at

JOHN

In the doorway. Expression odd. He doesn't have napkins.

ALL

Jodi is confused. Smiles; caught.

JODI
You weren't supposed to see this.
We wanted to surprise you.

No response from Dad. He stares at her. Notes the oil on the cake and her sleeve without reaction.

KEVIN
Happy birthday, Dad!

John says nothing. From behind himself, he reveals a shotgun. Jodi isn't amused.

JODI
What's going on? Put that away.
John, this isn't funny.

In wordless reply, he cocks it. Raises the barrel, seems taken over. He speaks in a haunted, confused whisper.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
The damned thing.

KEVIN
Dad?

JODI
Put that down. You're scaring
Kevin.

JOHN
It found me.

He points the barrel at his wife. Without hesitation, pulls the trigger. BLAM! Jodi gets it in the chest, lurching backward.

John re-loads, again. ADJUST as he stands over Jodi's writhing, headless body. He shoots her torso, and it no longer moves.

Kevin is terrified. Throws a heavy chair at his father, to stop him. Its weight knocks John to the floor.

He rises, undeterred, blocking the doorway. Lifts his shotgun, firing at Kevin. As he re-loads, Kevin makes a mad run down the hall, tripping and falling to the floor, his father on his heels. He scrambles to his feet and out the back door.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. REDDLES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

3

KEVIN

Crashing through the back door and into the yard.

BLAM!

He's hit by a shotgun blast and falls. Gets up, limps toward driveway bushes. Hides. Realizes he's been wounded on upper thigh and forehead.

JOHN

Furiously charges out of the house. Hunts for Kevin, shotgun extended. His frustration gnaws as he tries to find Kevin. He spots a

TRAIL OF BLOOD

(CONTINUED)

... on driveway, from Kevin's wounds.

JOHN

Follows it. Stops at bushes where the blood trail ends. Almost smiles. Fires into the thick growth. Re-loads. Fires, again. Shoves the bushes aside.

Kevin isn't there.

John can't tolerate the frustration; teeth bared, howling with rage.

JOHN

Kevin!

KEVIN

Panting in terror as he runs on his wounded leg. Managing to get on a low fence and climb a tree, hands raw. Blood runs from his forehead wound into his eyes, turning his vision red.

JOHN

Runs, then comes to a halt. The wind kicks up, but that is the only sound. He listens for Kevin as the leaves kick up around him. Looks around; a maniacal scan. Even up at the trees. Does he see Kevin?

KEVIN

Freezes. Manages to catch whatever blood might drip in his palm. But he panics as one droplet falls....onto

JOHN

... the top of his hand. He reacts to it, looks up into the many trees. Knows Kevin is up there. Can't determine which tree. There are too many. He tilts his barrel upward, starts firing into them. Over and over, not aiming, the gun blasts bright yellow flares in the night.

KEVIN

Clinging to a branch. A bullet whizzes by his face. He wipes blood, from his forehead wound, that gets in his eyes.

JOHN

Frustrated nothing has fallen from branches.

(CONTINUED)

He walks by his pick-up truck, catches his own reflection in the driver's window. The monstrous look on his face stops him; darkly intriguing.

As he stares into his shining eyes, he momentarily detects the deeper truth of who he is; the decency now eclipsed.

But it's too late. His rifle is wrenched from his hands by a massively powerful, invisible force. The force slams him against his truck. Turns him upside down. Begins to rip him to pieces. Blood is flung...

KEVIN

Watches, from his branch, in pale shock. Covers his eyes, unable to watch more. OVER we HEAR his voice; quiet, confessional.

KEVIN (V.O.)

...I never knew what it was that got to him or that killed him. And there wasn't much left of me after that night.

DISSOLVE TO:

4 EXT. CLOVERDALE, TEXAS - DAY

4

A little brick sheriff station. Could belong in Mayberry. A man in an informal small-town uniform emerges from the door: Kevin.

KEVIN (V.O.)

But everybody I ever met has a wound one way or the other.

KEVIN

He's Cloverdale's Sheriff now. Scars and loss half-drowned in those 37 year old eyes. He has a disciplined calm, despite tragic history. Likes to keep the town the same way. More lies. We notice the scar across his forehead; a hieroglyph of pain.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Thing is, you gotta sew it up good and tight. Otherwise it'll just keep opening and one day you'll bleed to death

(CONTINUED)

He looks around, taking in his town.

MONTAGE

Lunchtime in Cloverdale; a tiny town Norman Rockwell would love; sleepy, cozy, inviting, and a bit worn at its heels.

Townpeople are breaking for lunch. Main Street is yawning; folks lining up at the BURGER WIZARD, the church dozing on a weekday, the appliance store and other shops doing a sleepy business.

Some of the kids are headed home for lunch, and even little Cloverdale has a crossing guard.

NOTE: Maybe even have the second unit recreate some Rockwell paintings.

BURN-IN: **24 YEARS LATER.**

STRAUSS (O.S.)

Hey, man, what if he sings? I mean, Mickey sings. So...

5 EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

5

ADJUST to include Kevin's partner, DEPUTY DEREK STRAUSS, (31) a sweet, caffeinated chatterbox. Small town to the end. Went to NYC once. Missed Cloverdale.

They look both ways before they cross Main Street to get their mid-day meal at the Wizard. Strauss has a beat-up little artist's sketchpad opened clumsily in his hands. He sketches a friendly rodent, NICKY THE RAT, as they walk; shows them off to Kevin.

KEVIN

Nah. He just talks in that high voice.

STRAUSS

I think he sings, man. I think he serenaded Minnie. Women love that. Even mouse women. That's the power of friggin' song.

Derek is all innocence and enthusiasm. Smile wider than his face.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

I wouldn't make Nicky sing. That's just me. It feels... I don't know... superfluous.

STRAUSS

Okay. I see that. But here's the rebuttal: if Mickey *doesn't* sing, then Nicky The Rat *could*. See my point? I mean, maybe that would make a difference. Give him his own persona.

KEVIN

I wouldn't. Being honest.

STRAUSS

If I can get this to like Steve Jobs at that PIXIE company he's got that does all the big animation movies, I know Nicky could be huge.

KEVIN

You never know. People like Nicky. Mikey loves him.

STRAUSS

'specially if he sings, right?

KEVIN

I'm not so sure about the singing...

STRAUSS

Here's the whole secret to Nicky, okay: he's a pure spirit in a world gone mad. Did I ever tell you that?

KENNY

Yeah, probably.

STRAUSS

Whattya doing for your birthday this weekend? I got you a portable DVD player to surprise you.

KEVIN

I don't really celebrate.

Strauss understands. Keeps sketching. Sorry he brought it up.

(CONTINUED)

STRAUSS

One of these days, you'll put it behind you. 24 years is a long time.

We see for Kevin not long enough.

STRAUSS (CONT'D)

Me? I'd sell the place. Bad idea living in the house where your old man..

KEVIN

(a look)

I know what happened, Strauss.

Strauss shuts up. But never for long.

STRAUSS

I'm just saying it's time to move, get back together with Dina. You gotta miss her and Mikey. That's all. I'm done.

(beat)

The End.

(beat)

Roll the credits.

Kevin can't help but love the guy.

KEVIN

The house is all I got left of the family. Anyway, I've re-painted.

STRAUSS

There ain't enough paint in the world.

Kevin considers that. They're approaching their destination:

A focal point in Cloverdale come lunchtime. Weather's nice. A cross-section of the townspeople take out or sit at tables.

The Sheriff's Jeep pulls up. Parks in a cloud of gravel dust. Kevin and Strauss get out. Stretch. A little boy, Kevin's son MIKEY, trots up. Kevin hugs him. Mikey's milkshake gives him chocolate lips.

(CONTINUED)

MIKEY

...hi Daddy I already had my burger
and a hotdog too want my onion
rings I already put on ketchup I
have to go play.

KEVIN

No thanks, Mikey.

STRAUSS

I'll take 'em, right here.

He does, greedily.

KEVIN

I got you something. It was your
Grandpa's.

Kevin withdraws a small compass from his shirt pocket. Gives
it to Mikey. Shows him how it works.

MIKEY

What is it?

KEVIN

It's a compass. Tells you which
way you're going. See?
(re: magnetic north)
Santa lives in this direction.
Keep an eye on him, okay?

MIKEY

(loves it)
Okay.

KEVIN

Where's Mommy?

DINA (30) Kevin's wife and the prettiest woman in town
approaches with a tray of 2 burgers, chili fries, 2 malts.

DINA

Six minutes late, guys. You take
the scenic route?

STRAUSS

(eating Mikey's onion
rings)
Hey, Dina.

(CONTINUED)

DINA

Hey.

(indicating food)

Swiss for Derek. Jack and extra tomatoes for the Sheriff. The slaw machine is having a cow, so you each get a stick of celery: try to contain your excitement.

She's a little offbeat. One of the things Kevin likes best about her.

KEVIN

Thanks.

Kevin and Dina exchange a look. Now we see it; they still have something serious going. Just hit a rough patch. And we sense Kevin keeps his emotions in check. They don't know as well as we do that they should probably get back together.

Kevin and Strauss sit at a wooden table. In b.g., Mikey plays with his new compass. His little friend, BECKY (8) is nearby.

ONE TABLE OVER

Teenager CHARITY (16) sips a malt, smokes, giggles/gossips on her cellphone. Not much else to do around here. Her convertible is parked nearby in the lot.

KEVIN, DINA, STRAUSS

Eating. Thunder pounds sky and ground. There is day lightning; flashes of light.

DINA

Kinda early. Not even March.

KEVIN

Weird weather everywhere. Maybe there's something to this global warming thing.

DINA

(beat)

Lotta folks in town aren't feeling too good. Sleeping bad.

KEVIN

Flu. Like clockwork.

(CONTINUED)

DINA

Oliver thought he had a heart
attack last night.

KEVIN

I drove over. He's okay. One too
many of the Wally doubles.

STRAUSS

Dina, gotta ask you a question:
Mickey Mouse sang, right?

DINA

(deeply considers)
No.

STRAUSS

You sure? A ballad? Opera?
Something?

DINA

Mikey watches cartoons around the
clock, Strauss. I'm an expert on
what every major cartoon character
does or ever did for the last 75
years. I'm not proud of it.

Cloverdale's local priest, FATHER TULLI (50), exits the
restroom. Lean, benign. A touch over-dramatic. They all
make eye contact. He smiles self-consciously.

FATHER TULLI

Well, this is embarrassing.

STRAUSS

How you doing, Father?

FATHER TULLI

Not bad.

Tulli Searches Kevin's eyes. Gets in close; confidential.

FATHER TULLI (CONT'D)

I know it's the anniversary in a
few days. Pain likes people who
are vulnerable. Just drops by
uninvited.

Up this close, Tulli's "warmth" is unnerving. Kevin doesn't
need his "words of wisdom".

(CONTINUED)

FATHER TULLI (CONT'D)

Your daddy and grandpa were the age
you're turnin' when they passed.
You get lonely, God's a good
listener.

Dina bails Kevin out.

DINA

Father Tulli, I need my husband for
a second. Mind?
(to Kevin)
Talk to you a minute?

Kevin nods, a good excuse to get away from Father Tulli. We
now notice Kevin walks with a slight limp.

KEVIN AND DINA

He sighs with gratitude.

KEVIN

Thanks.

DINA

He's just... bored. Not enough sin
in this town.

KEVIN

Way I like it.
(changing the subject; a
nod to their son)
Mikey seems better.

DINA

Sniffles. No biggie.
(off his distraction)
I told you.

KEVIN

You did?

DINA

Last night. The phone. You and
me?

KEVIN

This time of year, it's...

She understands. They eat. Nothing said. Then, awkwardly,
apropos of nothing:

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Y'know, I never met anybody who'd
put up with either one of us.

He gets back to his burger. She looks at him.

DINA

That your way of saying maybe we
should get back together?

KEVIN

(mouth full)

It's been three months. Feels
unnatural. How can you stand
living in a trailer?

DINA

No cameras. No monitors.

KEVIN

Look, I know you hate the house.
That I'm hard to live with.
Distant or whatever you called it.

(off her deliberate
silence)

You're not gonna disagree even a
little?

A small smile from her.

DINA

It isn't the house.

(beat)

I wish you'd get back and see Dr.
Delchamps.

KEVIN

We talked it through a million
times.

(beat)

Miss me?

She does... But there's a lot of pain there. A sweet,
melancholy smile for him. They watch Mikey playing with his
little friend BECKY.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

They aren't full of fear like
adults.

(CONTINUED)

He almost smiles. Dina sneaks a look at him; likes seeing him happy; a rarity. But a trace of darkness crosses his face.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
(quietly)
... kids shouldn't have to be
afraid.

Distant thunder shakes the valley. Both look into the gathering darkness. OVER we HEAR someone HAMMERING a nail.

CUT TO:

A man in his 30's, GABE GREEN, pounds a nail into a wooden front door to hang something. Strong wind suddenly rises, shaking the trees and shrubs. As he hammers, he tells himself a joke; emphasizing key words with a hammer.

GABE
...so the guy says to this blind
chick, well, look, the reason my
snake keeps spitting-up when you
stroke him, is that he thinks he's
my *cock*.

He chuckles; gets a kick out of that. As he hammers, he hits his thumb.

GABE (CONT'D)
Goddamnit!

Becomes instantly irritated. The thumb is bleeding.

GABE (CONT'D)
Shit!

Starts hammering punitively, taking it out on the door. He pounds with all his strength, his fury growing, thrashing the finished wood.

The wind blows harder.

His teeth are gritted and his fury rises as he hacks at the door, trying to destroy it.

GABE (CONT'D)
Fuck fuck *fuck* fuck *FUCK!!!*

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 7

His rage goes out of control, and he starts bashing himself repeatedly in the face with the hammer, until he is covered in blood, screaming helplessly, out of control and unable to stop.

CUT TO:

8 EXT. REDDLE HOUSE - LATE DAY 8

Beautiful and green, everywhere you look. We recognize the house immediately, though it is a bit more weathered.

We don't really notice or make comment on something strange that is there in the background: surveillance cameras and jury-rigged wiring across the property.

The JEEP sits lonely outside. It will be dark soon.

8A OMITTED 8A

9 OMITTED 9

9A OMITTED 9A

10 OMITTED 10

11 OMITTED 11

12 OMITTED 12

12A OMITTED 12A

13 INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 13

Re-painted, re-carpeted. Different furniture. But the murders somehow linger, even after 25 years; ineradicable. We HEAR Scotch being poured.

13A INT. HOUSE/KITCHEN - SAME 13A

We notice photos on the wall: His mother, Dina, Mikey.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (V.O.)

Way I see it, people you care about never die. They just go somewhere else and wait for you. That's about as religious as I get.

DINING ROOM TABLE

Kevin has on soft music. Sits alone. Refills his glass with Scotch. Swallows it. Another.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Better than God deserves from me, considering.

He lets the liquor work on his head; the nightly ritual now that Dina and him are separated. He stares forward. Sitting on the table before him is

A KEEPSAKE BOX

Metal. Engraved, by hand, is "JOHN REDDLE". A heavy lock hangs.

KEVIN AND BOX

He stares at it. It seems to stare back.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was the only thing of my father's I kept. He told me he hid his dreams inside. I've never opened it, there was no key. I like imagining what's in there. The best of him.

He faintly HEARS the laughing voices of his mother and father.

KEVIN-CLOSE

ADJUST as he thinks he sees oil flecking his hand, falling from overhead. He suddenly has a

QUICK FLASHBACK

The night his father went insane. The maniacal eyes. Terrified faces. Hell in a traumatic blink.

KEVIN

(CONTINUED)

Recovering from the memory. He clears his eyes. Realizes he's imagined it. Glances at his hand and the ceiling; no oil.

He takes another drink. All is silent. Deformed shadows seem to fill the room.

SUDDENLY his phone RINGS at a strange, unusual speed. He reacts to that. Watches it. Finally, goes to answer it.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Sheriff Reddle.
(listens)
Hello?

WE HEAR static on the line. Then, a faraway male voice; almost ghostly; buried in static.

VOICE
... Kevin... Kevi...

KEVIN
Hello? Hello?

The voice fades, dies. Kevin holds the phone. It goes to a dial tone.

Is it the liquor?

In the silence of the room, his wrist watch alarm suddenly BEEPS, startling him. He stops it.

HEARS noises on the roof; an odd noise that gets louder. He glances up at

MULTIPLE SURVEILLANCE MONITORS

All throbbing without specific image. A veiled cloud seems to pass over them; like a curtain drawing. Then, one-by-one, they go black.

KEVIN

Reacts. The terrible noises continue on the roof and he grabs his flashlight.

He walks the perimeter, gun in one hand, flashlight the other. His flashlight flickers; he quickly hits it against his good thigh. Helps a little. Its erratic beam reveals:

14 CONTINUED: 14

FLASHLIGHT POV-SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

Angled variously at his house and yard. All have been wrenched from their mounts. Wires spark. One camera wiggles on the ground, stuck in motored sweep.

KEVIN

Stands in the center of his property. A little drunk. Thinks he hears more unsettling noises. Yells at the night; at whatever is out there.

KEVIN
LEAVE ME ALONE!

Then, he HEARS it; faraway rock music. Screeching tires on nearby road. The metal concussion and deafening scrape of a car overturning, sliding.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
(haunted)
...no

He runs to his JEEP. Drives down his driveway.

CUT TO:

15 INT. KEVIN'S JEEP - NIGHT 15

Bouncing over dirt driveway. He tries the police radio: weird static. Tries to dial Strauss on cellphone. Can't get a good signal. More odd static.

KEVIN
Shit!

He bounces over a big rut, almost losing control. Drives on, coming to the main road. Speeds through fog, toward the direction of the accident. Looking for the overturned car.

Finally, comes upon it.

THE WRECK

The convertible has flipped, slid sideways on the quiet two-lane. Windshield shattered.

KEVIN

Running toward it, trying to call in the accident. Still unable to get a signal.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Come on! Goddamnit!

THE WRECK

At roadside. The car is upside down. Charity is pinned underneath it, only her upper body protruding. She lifts her head and her face is bloody; her mouth gurgles, pleads, trying to form words. ADJUST to Kevin quickly approaching her.

Her eyes stare, in shock. Her fingers clutch a bit. Words barely audible:

CHARITY
... road was... *alive*.

KEVIN
... it's Sheriff Reddle. I'm gonna take you to the hospital, okay? Can't get a signal out here to call an ambulance...
(beat)
I'll try not to hurt you.

She collapses face down and he kneels, carefully wraps strong arms around her upper body. Pulls. ADJUST to reveal she's been cut in half; Kevin has only the severed torso. He gasps. She dies. He sits on the road, holding her.

CUT TO:

16 INT. CLOVERDALE HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - LATER 16

Kevin paces. Strauss enters. Sees Kevin covered in blood.

KEVIN
I couldn't get a signal.

STRAUSS
You did what you could.

Kevin says nothing. Knows he was drinking; is it noticeable? DR. COHEN approaches. Longtime resident; pro-healer. She nods at Strauss.

COHEN
Deputy.
(to Kevin)
How are you doing?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

COHEN (CONT'D)
(off his shrug)
Any idea what caused the accident?

KEVIN
She said the road was... alive.

Looks exchanged.

COHEN
We'll test for alcohol...the usual.
(to Strauss)
Need to talk to you about the guy
you brought in.

STRAUSS
(off Kevin's look)
Tried to reach you an hour ago.
You picked-up, phone kept dying.
(beat)
Gabe Green was working around his
house. Son found him.
(beat)
Look...maybe I'll... wait out here.
Let you two talk.

He obviously doesn't like blood.

CUT TO:

17 INT. HOSPITAL MORGUE - NIGHT 17

Gabe's sheet-covered body is on a gurney, face-up. The covered facial area is bloody. Cohen explains:

COHEN
Went after himself with a hammer.

KEVIN
Hard way to commit suicide

Cohen doesn't disagree. Kevin lifts the sheet to look at the battered face.

COHEN
I left you a message couple hours
ago about him.

He is troubled. Not quite listening. Then:

KEVIN
What?

(CONTINUED)

COHEN

A message. I left one for you.

KEVIN

I'm having... my phone is... I didn't get the message.

She stares at Kevin. Seems to be assessing him. Does she know he was drinking?

She holds his look. He doesn't understand what she wants. Finally in an unnerved voice:

COHEN

There's something else I think you better see.

She shows him another covered body on a gurney. Pulls back the sheet.

A YOUNG MAN

With throat slashed.

COHEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My associate, Dr. Morris. We were talking normally...he suddenly grabbed scissors...slashed his throat.

(beat)

I don't want this getting out.. People are scared enough. They need to know they can come here if they need help. That it's safe.

He looks at her. She is very upset. Trying to stay professional.

COHEN (CONT'D)

The girl...her family needs to be called.

KEVIN

I'll do it.

COHEN

Look exhausted, Sheriff.

He fears she does know he's been drinking.

(CONTINUED)

COHEN (CONT'D)
I'll handle it.

KEVIN
Are you all right?

She looks at him with barely concealed fear.

COHEN
Sheriff Reddle, what's happening?

KEVIN
Sorry?

COHEN
Three in one day. Something is
happening.

Her eyes bore into Kevin's. He looks at her. Can't tell her what he's really thinking.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Should I be scared?

Kevin considers that. Isn't about to acknowledge his own fears. Stays professional, though it's getting harder.

KEVIN
No. That's when real trouble comes.

COHEN
Looks to me it's already here?

Her gaze is intense. He has no answer.

CUT TO:

18 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER 18

By himself. Leaning against wall. He sees his reflection.

Sees the scar across his forehead begins to slowly zipper open. As if what was "sewn" isn't holding. We see red rawness within. There are snakish things in there, eeling, writhing. Kevin is shaken, tries to calm himself.

Reacts as he watches rotted fingers slowly reach from the opening. One has his father's distinctive ring.

(CONTINUED)

Kevin concentrates. The finger curls in with frustration. Goes back inside his head.

KEVIN (V.O.)
Shrink I used to see, Delchamps,
told me it's anxiety. Grief that
never went away.

He concentrates. The wound slowly re-seals. He sighs;
sore, exhausted.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... I thought I had it under
control. I was getting worse. So
was Cloverdale.

HOLD.

CUT TO:

Watching a clerk carry several boxed MONITORS and EXTERIOR
SECURITY CAMERAS from the store to his JEEP.

Kevin checks his watch. Strolls the small store. Stops to
watch a football game on the shelf of demo TVs.

LITTON (O.S.)
... who's winning?

Kevin turns. Sees LITTON (35): THE CLOVERDALE DAILY
publisher and reporter. Litton has X-ray eyes; limited
manners. He sips coffee from the java place across the
street. Nibbles a muffin, spilling crumbs. Kevin doesn't
like him.

KEVIN
Wasn't really watching.

Litton stares and smiles. Like Kevin is a bug under a
microscope.

LITTON (V.O.)
Really?
(beat)
How's life, Sheriff?

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

I get up, I'm still in the mirror,
no complaints.

LITTON

(dead eyed)

I'd ask the mirror how it feels
about that.

KEVIN

No food or beverages allowed, Mr.
Litton.

Kevin points to the wall sign. Litton ignores it; amused by petty regulations. Stares at Kevin through cynic's eyes.

LITTON

Y'know, actually, I meant who was
winning in Cloverdale? You or
whatever is driving people insane
and killing 'em? My paper likes to
stay current.

KEVIN

People are complicated, they have
problems. And we get wild animals
around here.

LITTON

Spoke with Doctor Cohen. She said
it wasn't a wild animal. Said you
concurred.

KEVIN

Write it the way you want, Mr.
Litton. You always do.

LITTON

Didn't know you read my stuff, I'm
flattered.

(beat)

You know, there was one other time
crime in Cloverdale went crazy.
Did you know that?

(off Kevin's silence)

Yeah, murder and violence rates
shot up. People couldn't sleep.
Got sick for no reason. Went
crazy. Bodies were found skinned,
crushed. Just like in Sturgess.
Been there?

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

(avoiding)

No.

LITTON

No kidding? I heard you had family from there.

(off Kevin's silence)

Anyway, I've heard people say all that mayhem was the Electric Project in the 30's. Messed up something in the earth.

KEVIN

Everybody has an opinion.

LITTON

Except you.

KEVIN

I told you what I think.

LITTON

You told me what you want me to think.

(beat)

So, this "force" that's assaulting Cloverdale...you know: the one you don't want to talk about..

KEVIN

Things like that don't exist except in the minds of frightened, unstable people.

LITTON

Like your father?

KEVIN

You never knew my father.

LITTON

Guess you didn't either. Lotta pain in your family. Must catch up to you.

Kevin isn't going to play along. But he wants Litton to know something important about him:

KEVIN

If you let it.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

LITTON

Love a positive thinker. Always
the last to go down with the ship.

His eyes slide to the clerk loading those monitors and
cameras.

LITTON (CONT'D)

Those all yours?

19A EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY - SAME

19A

Strauss's cruiser is parked on the street under the shade of
the tree. Small-town idyllic.

19B INT. CRUISER - DAY - SAME

19B

Strauss sketches the cheery Nicky the Rat, lost in it like a
little boy. ADJUST to see NICKY THE RAT doing something
heroic. Strauss giggles with innocent pleasure. Listens to
the radio; country western. The signal is bad; getting
worse. Strauss fiddles with it. Taps it. Static
gymnastics, makes weird sounds. OVER we HEAR

LITTON (V.O.)

So, where do you suppose it went?
What did you say your Dad called
it, when they found you? "The
Damned Thing?"

19C INT. "CLOVERDALE TV AND STEREO" - DAY - SAME

19C

Litton: relentless. Kevin: avoiding.

LITTON (V.O.)

And why does it keep coming back?

Litton smiles like he wants to eat Kevin.

LITTON (CONT'D)

Must be hard to live with your
memories. Seeing everyone you
love, murdered when you're just a
kid. Can I get a quote from you
about that?

KEVIN

You're a miserable prick. How's
that?

(CONTINUED)

LITTON

One question: why would a guy buy so many surveillance cameras and monitors -- when I hear he's got a bunch already -- if he didn't think there was something out to get him?

(chuckles)

Maybe you're expecting a monster.

Kevin stares at him; he's looking at one. Litton manages a smile. His caustic tone shifts to warning.

LITTON (CONT'D)

Or maybe you won't be happy until the same thing happens here that happened in Sturgess, up the road. While you pretend you're in control.

KEVIN

Stay away from me.

LITTON

Final stage of denial is self destruction. Don't take Cloverdale down with you.

He walks away. Forces a car to stop for him. Kevin watches him go, fighting anger.

20 OMITTED 20

21 OMITTED 21

22 INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - DAY 22

Silence. The clock on the wall ticks softly. Kevin sits at the table in a shaft of sunlight through the window, staring at his Father's locked chest. He reaches out to it. Runs two or three fingers over it. Tempted to open it.

He stares at it. His need to see the contents begins to overwhelm him and he unsheathes his belt knife. Begins to pry at the lock, the hinges. Accidentally cuts himself a little. Becomes obsessed about opening it. Finally, the box can be opened. He does.

HIS FATHER'S CHEST

(CONTINUED)

Inside, it's empty.

KEVIN

Confused.

KEVIN (V.O.)
...I realized, at that moment, he
had no dreams. He knew there
wouldn't be time.

He notices an inside corner of the box bottom curling a
little. He feels it. Carefully lifts it.

CONCEALED COMPARTMENT

Under the secret layer, he finds old newspaper clippings from
THE STURGESS DAILY.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Sturgess had been forty miles south
of Cloverdale... before it became a
ghost town.

KEVIN

Looks through the front pages. Faded, ripped. All circa
1959.

INSERT - FRONTPAGES

First headline reads: **"Latest Gusher Promises Huge Profits"**
A group of men, covered in messy oil, stand grouped and
smiling.

Second headline, months later: **"Oil Deposits Prove Elusive"**
Sub-head: "Community In Shock Over Bizarre Oil Crisis"

Another, even later: **"Local Teacher Bludgeons Family"**

KEVIN Reacts to the articles; unsettled.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... I remember hearing the stories
when I was a kid: it began with bad
weather. Wind like a banshee; got
under people's skin.

As he describes it, he hears wind outside his house. His
imagination?

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Neighbors and friends... became
enemies. Fear became violence.

He imagines HEARING: Arguments. Beatings. Screams; angry,
agonized. He reads the final front page:

"BLOODY SLAUGHTER ON MAIN STREET. 208 DEAD" An accompanying
photo shows the main street. Ravaged bodies fill streets.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Official story was the town
couldn't take it when the oil
fields dried up. Turned on itself.
208 people died like animals.
Witnesses described an overwhelming
force. Then, it was gone. Ones
who lived moved. Some to
Cloverdale. Like my folks.
(beat)
The Damned Thing destroyed the
whole town.

He is afraid of what this means. OVER we HEAR

DINA (V.O.)
Hello?

23 INT. KEVIN'S JEEP - NIGHT 23

He drives. On his cell phone.

24 EXT. DINA'S TRAILER - NIGHT 24

On a large expanse of land. The lights are on and we can see
her in there cooking. OVER we HEAR cartoons.

25 INT. DINA'S TRAILER - NIGHT 25

Mikey is watching cartoons. Dina is making a salad, phone
wedged between ear and neck.

26 INT. KEVIN'S JEEP - NIGHT 26

Driving fast. Intense. INTERCUT with Dina.

KEVIN
It's me.

(CONTINUED)

DINA

Hi. Hey, I was thinking, maybe you and me and Mikey could get together tomorrow for your birthday? He'd love that. He has something special for his Daddy.

(whispers)

It's a badge he made of tin foil. Do...

*
*
*
*
*

KEVIN

(interrupting)

Listen to me, Dina: you and Mikey have to leave town. Right away. I want you to call your neighbors. Tell them to leave.

*

DINA

What's going on? Is the storm taking a turn for the worse?

*
*

KEVIN

My father knew it was coming to kill him.

DINA

What was coming?. I don't underst...

KEVIN

... he knew something bad was in Cloverdale. Something that came from Sturgess that caused that slaughter in '59. Something they set free. Something that followed him.

DINA

Kevin...What are you talking about?

*

KEVIN

... Dina, he and my mother moved. But it found him. That's what he said that night: "It found me." I think he killed my mother and tried to kill me to protect us.

DINA

To *protect* you.

(caustic)

Right, now I understand. Of course.

*
*
*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DINA (CONT'D)

He killed her and tried to kill you
to *protect* you.

(beat)

You wanna know why we can't live
together, listen to yourself it's
totally...

*
*
*
*

KEVIN

(overlaps)

... get Mikey in your car, meet me
at the gas station in an hour.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Call everyone you can. Tell 'em to do the same. I want everybody out of Cloverdale.

The TV suddenly gets loud.

DINA

(to Kevin)

Hold on.

(to Mikey)

Mikey, turn it down!

MIKEY

I like it loud.

DINA

You either turn it down or no TV!
I'm not kidding.

A wind rises outside. Shakes the trailer a little. Then, thunder. Lightning. The trailer creaks like the bad weather wants in. She holds the phone more tightly to her ear:

DINA (CONT'D)

Kevin? You there?

(beat)

Hello? Kevin?

The lights start to flicker. The TV Set goes out. She looks outside.

DINA's POV

The sky is oddly starless. The wind howls. Laundry, drying on a line, flaps.

DINA

A pillowcase SUDDENLY blows against the window, scaring her half to death. She catches her breath. Unnerved. Hides it from Mikey.

MIKEY

Mommy...

DINA

... it's okay, baby. Just wind.
Let's have some dinner.

The wind suddenly jolts the trailer hard and Dina falls to the floor. Mikey gets closer. They listen as the wind whips everything outside, as fear starts to roll over Dina.

(CONTINUED)

Then, it stops. All is deathly silent.

SUDDENLY her phone Rings. Almost gives her a heart attack. She manages to get to it.

DINA (CONT'D)

Is it you?

KEVIN (V.O.)

Lost you.

Mikey notices a thin streak of oil running down the wall of the trailer.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

This crazy weather is part of it...
I think a lot of electronic stuff
in town is messed up.

DINA

Who the HELL cares what you think?
KEVIN. HUH? This is all your
fault. Letting the town be scared.
Letting your own son be scared to
DEATH.

*

Mikey has never seen her this way.

MIKEY

Mommy? What's wrong?

DINA

SHUT UP!

(to Kevin)

You stop calling me. You have no
feeling for anyone. Our son is
going to turn out the same way.

MIKEY

Mommy...

DINA

I TOLD YOU TO SHUT YOUR MOUTH!

Mikey starts to cry. Tries to suppress it. The wind outside fiercely shakes the trailer.

Driving.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

KEVIN

Dina? Let me talk to Mikey. Dina?

He HEARS Mikey crying; terrified. Pleading with his mother to stop it. Then, Dina hangs-up on him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

(slams phone)

Shit!

He speeds toward her place.

CUT TO:

28 EXT DINA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

28

Kevin roars up to it. Gets out, fighting wind. Sees Dina's trailer being shaken hard. He runs to it

KEVIN

DINA!

He manages to enter the flapping door.

29 INT. DINA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

29

Mikey is in a corner, terrified. ADJUST to include Kevin. The wind is a deafening moan.

KEVIN

Mikey, it's me. Where is your...

The trailer is suddenly shaken, again, by ferocious wind. Before he can react, he's hit over the head with a pan and turns to see:

DINA

Holding the pan. Teeth bared, face deranged. ADJUST to include Kevin. He grabs the pan. Shakes her hard.

DINA

I told you not to come here!

KEVIN

DINA!

He slaps her across the face and she stares at him, the fury dropping from her expression.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Whatever roiled within her is dissipating. Still, she's shocked; deeply distressed by what she almost did. *

DINA
Oh, God...Oh, God... *

ALL

Kevin has Mikey and Dina. Manages to escape the trailer. They run through the wild wind, which is tossing leaves and trash in their path.

They make it to Kevin's JEEP and he gets them inside. Instantly roars away.

CUT TO:

He races down her dirt road, toward highway. Mikey is scared. Dina seems out of it, no longer overpowered. She looks up at Kevin, shame and fear and guilt shadowing her face.

Kevin glances at her as he drives. Tears cloud her eyes.

DINA

I... I almost...

KEVIN

It wasn't you.

Kevin's cellphone chirps. Strauss on caller ID He sounds overwhelmed.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Where are you?

STRAUSS (V.O.)

Town. It's bad here, Kev. People are coming unglued.

KEVIN

I'll be there in a few minutes. Gotta drop Dina and Mikey at the house.

STRAUSS (V.O.)

Never seen people like this. They won't listen to me. I'm scared.

KEVIN

Strauss listen to me...

STRAUSS

I'm in over my head here and...

(CONTINUED)

His cellphone dies. The radio SUDDENLY turns on; very loud. The interior lights of the JEEP flicker.

Then, the roof of the JEEP is pounded on and they look up. Mikey SCREAMS.

KEVIN

Mikey, get on the floor!

He keeps driving. The pounding is getting louder on the roof. He speeds toward his house. ADJUST as he reacts to the road ahead undulating. It seems alive.

Kevin grits his teeth and drives over it. The JEEP bounces, swerves, nearly losing control. He looks over at Dina. She is looking at him, unblinking. He knows she is in there. Takes her hand. She lets him.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. CONFSSIONAL BOOTH - CLOVERDALE CHURCH - NIGHT 31

A guilt kiosk in the Cloverdale Church. OVER we HEAR a highly stressed-out Strauss:

STRAUSS (V.O.)

...forgive me father for I have sinned. It's been a month since my last confession.

FATHER TULLI (V.O.)

Go on, my son.

32 INT. CONFSSION BOOTH - CONTINUOUS 32

Strauss on one side of the screen, Father Tulli the other. Outside, the townspeople can be heard, in a state of rising anarchy: guns fired, screaming, arguing voices. It's all making Strauss scared. Tulli seems calm.

STRAUSS

Well, it's going kinda nuts out there so I don't have much time but I really needed to talk to you.

People are yelling and pounding on the church doors.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER TULLI

Ignore them. Go on.

STRAUSS

Well, Cloverdale has always been quiet and safe. Now, it's... going crazy. Bodies showing up. People yelling and screaming at each other. Listen to 'em out there, it's like anarchy! I don't know what to do. How can I call myself a lawman? Will God forgive me?

Strauss's cellphone RINGS.

STRAUSS (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

(answering)

Yeah? Kev, slow down. You're gonna stay at your place? You want me to try and get people out of town? I don't know if I can do that: nobody will listen to me... hello? Hello?

The phone dies.

STRAUSS (CONT'D)

Damn it.

(beat)

Sorry, father.

We notice he is nervously drawing an evil, demonized NICKY THE RAT that's devouring a sketched version of Strauss.

Outside, people are pounding harder on the church doors.

STRAUSS (CONT'D)

Look. I know this is supposed to be anonymous but I'm sure you know it's me and there's not much else to say 'cept I'm scared because no one will listen to me out there.

FATHER TULLI

Go on.

STRAUSS

People already think I'm a big joke or something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

STRAUSS (CONT'D)

I mean, my ex-girlfriend even said I was immature because I tried to win her back with NICKY THE RAT.

FATHER TULLI

Who?

STRAUSS

He's my cartoon creation. Like Mickey Mouse except he sings.

There is a long silence. Finally:

FATHER TULLI

You tried to win her back with a cartoon rat?

STRAUSS

Uh huh.

Silence. SUDDENLY Father Tulli's hand smashes through the lattice grille, grabs Strauss's service revolver.

FATHER TULLI

You're an idiot. No wonder she left you.

STRAUSS AND FATHER TULLI

He shoots Strauss through the head, splattering his brains on Church property. Tulli wipes Strauss's blood off his own face. He's so sick of listening to people whine.

CUT TO:

33 OMITTED 33

34 EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE-NIGHT - (MOMENTS LATER) 34

Kevin's Jeep drives up. Gets Dina and the kids out of the JEEP. Moves them toward the house.

35 INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 35

Kevin enters. Dina SCREAMS. Staring at them from the shadows are:

TOWNS PEOPLE

(CONTINUED)

A dozen or so. Jammed on the sofa, chairs, against walls. In the kitchen, down the halls. They hold rifles and guns on Kevin, Dina and the kids. They look haunted. Scared.

We won't get to know all but they include: JANET (35), LENNY (45), MARY (25) and others.

ALL

Kevin looks at their traumatized faces. He's pissed; on edge.

KEVIN

Put those down! What are you doing in my house?

They lower their weapons.

MARY

It's not safe anywhere. Our neighbors shot at us, blocked the road. What the hell is going on, Sheriff?

LENNY

My wife tried to kill me an hour ago. She slit her throat. I tried to leave town, got attacked.

JANET

It's like they've all lost their minds, Sheriff! Harley down at the Wizard was chasing people with a cleaver!

MARY

We had to fight to get up here. You're the Sheriff. You have to protect us. You took a solemn vow and we're scared and...

She bursts into tears.

LENNY

Shut the fuck up, Mary!

MARY

You shut the fuck up!

She backhands Lenny, and he starts to go for her before Kevin roughly pulls them apart.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN
ENOUGH!

Kevin opens his basement door.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I want you all down there. You'll
be safe. Lock the door. Stay
quiet.
(off their hesitation)
NOW!

Many go down. Janet turns on stairs to face him; her eyes
stricken.

JANET
Don't leave us down there...

KEVIN
You have weapons. Anybody breaks
in, use them if you have to.

JANET
(pleading)
Don't make me go down there with
them...

Her fear is agonizing.

KEVIN
Go on. It's the safest place you
can be.

She doesn't believe him, but has no choice. He rounds up the
townspeople and herds them to the door.

Kevin closes the doors on their scared faces. Locks the door
from his side. Turns to Dina:

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Take Mikey into the bedroom.

Dina is mostly herself. She nods.

MIKEY
I wanna stay out here with you,
Daddy.

Kevin goes down to Mikey's eye level.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

Mikey, I need you to go in there
and be very quiet and keep an eye
on mommy for me because she's
scared. Can you do that for me?

(off his nod, to Dina)

You all right?

DINA

I felt it go inside me at the
trailer. Like a poison.

(beat)

What if it didn't leave? What if
it's still in me?

(afraid for Mikey)

If I hurt him...

KEVIN

I think it stays when there's
something it can make worse. Bad
things. I've never known you to
have any.

DINA

Guess you don't know me that well.

Neither smiles. The comment resonates for him; it's what
Litton said to him about his Father. Dina takes Mikey into
the other room.

36 EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

36

The wind is rising.

37 INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

37

Dina and Mikey are on the floor.

They HEAR the wind. Mikey reassures his mother.

MIKEY

(bravely)

Don't be scared.

His bravery makes her eyes glisten.

Mikey notices the table side clock stop. Dina notes black
oil freckling Mikey's face from the ceiling above. She wipes
it off frantically and pulls him away into the corner of the
room, protectively, eyes watching; scanning.

38 INT. RESUME LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 38

Kevin notices the wall clock ticking away the seconds as it stops dead. He looks at his watch: dead. The wind starts to scream.

He checks the row of surveillance monitors, but they are still lifeless and black. SUDDENLY, in succession, the lights go out. Abrupt blackness. For several beats. Voices cry out from the basement below.

The house switches over to auxiliary power and the room ignites with sickly, yellow battery light. The surveillance monitors begin to throb anew, without detailed image... just static and white noise.

Kevin stares out, into the night, through the windows but can see nothing. Too dark. The wind rises still louder

It's coming. He can feel it. A blown branch hits the window, startling him. SUDDENLY from the basement is a GUNSHOT and a SCREAM. Then, another SCREAM. Then, pounding on the door.

KEVIN

Goes to the basement door. Reaches to unlock it. Suddenly stops himself; something has overtaken him; his eyes dark and cruel. He doesn't unlock the door.

He stares at it, as the sounds within grow frantic.

LENNY (V.O.)
OPEN THE DOOR! WE'RE TRAPPED IN
HERE!

JANET (V.O.)
SHERIFF PLEASE! LET US OUT!

MARY (V.O.)
LET US OUT! IT'S YOUR FAULT THIS
IS HAPPENING!

More pounding on the door. Then:

LENNY (V.O.)
Get out of my way, you fucking
bitch!

(CONTINUED)

MARY (V.O.)
(to Lenny)
Don't point that gun at me! What
are you doing?!

Kevin's darkened face starts to take on a wicked smile; he is *enjoying* this; taking ghastly pleasure in their fear and terror. He yells loud enough for them to hear in the basement, his eyes thrilled:

KEVIN
You better get out of his way!

There's a GUNSHOT and a SCREAM. Then, another SCREAM. Kevin listens as the people in the basement SHRIEK and FIGHT. His eyes are on fire with hideous glee.

JANET (V.O.)
No! Don't touch me! No! No! NO!

Her voice cuts off in a piercing, blood-curdling scream.

We can hear them murdering each other down there. By hand and with weapons, ghastly, horrid sounds of people against one another.

Kevin listens to their SCREAMING and HELPLESS PLEAS. Places his ear to the door to listen for the details. All is quiet.

Then, SUDDENLY, there is frantic POUNDING on the door. The terrified voice MARY.

MARY (V.O.)
... LET ME OUT OF HERE! THEY'RE
ALL DEAD! PLEASE!! THEY'RE ALL
DEAD! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME IN HERE!!
YOU HAVE TO HELP ME. YOU HAVE TO
HELP ME!

Kevin seems to be softened by her wrenching cries as she batters the door from within.

The darkness drops from his face as he goes to the door, touching it as she pounds frantically from inside.

Finally, he raises his own shotgun and FIRES right into the door to silence her. He hears her tumble down the wooden stairs. Then all is silent. Beat.

DINA (O.S.)
... Kevin?

(CONTINUED)

He turns to face her.

KEVIN AND DINA

She sees his smoking shotgun, the hole in the basement door. He looks half-crazed. She realizes in an instant he's different. And it's breaking her heart.

DINA (CONT'D)

... no.

He stares at her. His eyes in an ambiguous teeter of concern and madness.

KEVIN

... what's the matter?

DINA

(to Mikey)

Mikey, lock the door.

Mikey can be seen in the room at the top of the stairs. He is terrified; frozen by all the violence.

Kevin's voice is haunted; only partly himself.

KEVIN

You know... I would never hurt you.

She wants to believe him. Can't. Looks into his eyes a little too long, seeking reassurance. But it's not there. We can see him disintegrating before our eyes.

He is shaking a little and deeply frightening to Dina who turns and runs for the room. This angers Kevin.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

(furious)

I said I'd never hurt you! Didn't you hear me?!

He raises the shotgun and is about to pursue her down the hallway to the room.

A rock crashes through glass.

40 EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - FATHER TULLI - CONTINUOUS 40

Looking insane. Trying to sound calm and holy; a caricaturish version.

FATHER TULLI
Sheriff! Come out! I want to talk
to you and your family! You don't
have to be afraid! God loves you!

Beat. He gets no response. In animal frustration:

FATHER TULLI (CONT'D)
DON'T YOU FUCKING IGNORE ME!

41 INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 41

Rocks are being thrown at the windows. The house is being rocked by the screaming winds. Branches break one of the living room windows and wind and debris howl through the broken glass.

FATHER TULLI (V.O.)
COME OUT! COME OUT! COME OUT!

MIKEY AND DINA

In the locked bedroom. He covers his ears; hating this.

MIKEY
Stop it, stop it, stop it!

Dina tries not to look scared for Mikey. She is scanning the room for the best way out.

KEVIN

Reacts to someone pounding on his front door.

VOICE (V.O.)
Please let me in! They're trying
to kill me!

Kevin thinks it over, his face draped in growing madness. Looks through the peephole. Opens the door using the chain. ADJUST to Litton, bloody, knifed face pressed to the chained-door opening.

(CONTINUED)

LITTON

Please! My brother just killed my
wife! Came after me!

Kevin studies Litton's terrified eyes. Litton is frantic.
Tries logic.

LITTON (CONT'D)

... you knew it was just a matter
of time. Your Grandpa dropping the
first drill... he started it. Let
it out of the earth. It doesn't
want us, it wants you!

(shakes door)

LET ME IN!

(off Kevin's icy stare,
desperate)

LET ME IN, YOU SON OF A BITCH, LET
ME IN...

In reply, Kevin shotguns him. Litton slumps on the front
step. Kevin shoves Litton's dying, shuddering arm from the
door's path, re-closes the door. Looks down the hallway to
the locked door. Ready to head down to kill Dina and Mikey.

SUDDENLY there is the whoop of an electronic alarm; high-
pitched and terrifying. Kevin reacts to the low, heavy
thumping sound of something incredibly huge with a jarring
footstep that approaches. The house shakes with each boom.
Kevin looks haunted.

KEVIN

... it's here.

The sounds are almost deafening. As if it is mowing down the
earth outside.

Something in his eyes becomes protective, again, of his wife
and son. He goes down the hall to the locked door.

*The part of him that hasn't been overtaken needs to make sure
his wife and son are safe.*

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Dina! Open the door. Please.

He hears glass break in the bedroom.

42 EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - SIDE WINDOW - CONTINUOUS 42

Dina slips through the broken glass with Mikey. Shotgun scanning; ready to kill what she must. She holds Mikey's hand.

She is suddenly grabbed. Turns to see Father Tulli, sneering.

FATHER TULLI
Where's your husband, bitch? I
told him to come out here!

Tulli looks at Dina with a bitter slash of mouth:

FATHER TULLI (CONT'D)
Your husband and his family cursed
all of us! He brought the evil
here! Look at us! You all have to
die.

Father Tulli grabs little Mikey by the shirt and pulls him face to face, uncomfortably close.

FATHER TULLI (CONT'D)
It's coming for you, too! Just
like it came for your father, and
his father, and his! The curse
is...

There is a loud BOOM. He doesn't finish. Eyes wide, mouth open. Blood leaks from his mouth. He stares into Mikey's terrified eyes. Then dies.

He falls to reveal Kevin standing behind him, his own gun smoking, half deranged. But still her husband and Mikey's father. He fights being overtaken:

KEVIN
Go... inside. Now!

He stands there, for this moment, a presence of reason. The wind rises. He looks down at his feet, sees black ooze rising from the earth around his boots.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
It's me it wants!

Suddenly, he reels. Something is happening; there is agony building within his head. He collapses.

(CONTINUED)

DINA AND MIKEY

Dina runs to Kevin's side, grabs onto his arm. Tries to help him up. He screams against the wind.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Get back inside!

DINA
I won't leave you!

He just looks at her. Feels the earth shuddering. Begins to fully realize. He plunges his fingers into the ground, over and over, as if drilling.

KEVIN
The drilling... set it loose. It's all chaos down there.

More of the black ooze seeps from the ground around him. In seconds, it all forms into

THE DAMNED THING

A hideous, oily, twelve-foot tall monster. It moves in a blurred way but its shifting, indistinct, dark shape can be made out. It looms over all like a black wave, an open maw issuing a hideous roaring scream.

DINA, MIKEY AND KEVIN

She keeps trying to drag Kevin to safety.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
... leave me.

MIKEY
Daddy, please!

MIKEY (CONT'D)
Daddy!

Mikey is in a state of terror but embraces his father, despite the looming, roaring oil monster which towers over them all. Kevin fights to remain himself.

KEVIN
Get him inside. Now!

He pushes her and, in terror, she grips Mikey tight.

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

NOW!

Tears fill her eyes as she and Mikey are swept aside by the hard, rising wind and they run, tripping from the force of the gale.

They cower at the foot of the trees, and Mikey grips a trunk just like Kevin did when he was Mikey's age. The wind around them howls. Cacophony.

KEVIN

Stands tall against the Damned Thing.

KEVIN AND DAMNED THING

He stands before it. It stills. The winds die down. All is silent.

DINA AND MIKEY

Watch in stilled silence.

KEVIN AND DAMNED THING

He stands before its immense, hateful shimmer. A trickle of blood creeks down his forehead.

Then, without his resistance, the forehead wound gradually tears open, spreading, getting larger and larger.

Kevin almost looks relieved. It's horrible to watch the skin tearing away from his forehead and face revealing bone.

His skull cracks open. We can see brain and terrible, writhing things that dwell within. Whether traumatized thoughts that have taken form or The Damned Thing itself, invading, we can't be sure.

Strangely, his voice is calm; resigned.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... right before I died, I felt something inside me settle. It was just past midnight. My birthday.

Then, The Damned Thing rises high, with an inhuman roar, and engulfs him, finishes him.

(CONTINUED)

DINA AND MIKEY

Watch in horror. She covers Mikey's ears but can't block the sounds of Kevin's hideous death. She forces herself to look.

KEVIN'S HOUSE

Begins to shake. As if on the epicenter of some ever worsening quake.

THE DAMNED THING

Shines; half oil, half blood.

Mikey pulls his mother's hands from his eyes. Crying in deep anguish. The night is going quiet and still and dark as the inhuman, satiated howl of The Damned Thing deafens, and it is absorbed by the oily land around it.

DINA

Takes Mikey's hand. Pulls him close as they cower in the monster's hideous wake. They carefully, quickly move to

THE JEEP

Get in. And drive away.

HIGH ANGLE

The jeep as it leaves. It's all over now.

CUT TO:

42A OMITTED 42A

43 INT. JEEP - SAME 43

Dina trying to leave Cloverdale. She pulls Mikey close to her. Strokes his head. Occasional burst of music and voices between static on the radio as she tries to get news.

43A HEADLIGHTS ON THE ROAD - NIGHT - SAME 43A

Curves, isolation. OVER we HEAR the JEEP run out of gas.
Dies.

43B INT. JEEP - NIGHT - SAME 43B

Rolls to a stop. Dina silently curses the empty tank. The
wind rises. Mikey looks at his mother. Dina tries to look
reassuring.

Mikey points to the dashboard.

MIKEY

Mommy look.

They see the

DASH CLOCK

Beginning to go backwards. Dina locks the doors, hearing the
wind rise.

MIKEY

There is a whirring sound from his pocket. He withdraws his
grandfather's compass out, and it is spinning madly.

It suddenly stops, *pointing its needle directly at Mikey.*

DINA AND MIKEY

She holds him protectively. Mikey looks up at her. Senses
whatever is outside now wants him.

Something starts to pound maniacally on the roof of the JEEP.

CUT TO BLACK: